

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **Affordable Housing Week: March 19 - 26**

Housing advocates from around the state are participating in activities during Affordable Housing Week, March 19 to 26, to raise awareness about the need for more decent, affordable, accessible housing in Illinois.

Affordable Housing Week is coordinated by Housing Action Illinois. Housing Action Illinois works to increase and preserve the supply of decent, affordable, accessible housing in Illinois for low-and moderate-income households. A unit is considered affordable if it costs no more than 30% of the renter's income.

A Sangamon County household that rents must include at least 1.7 full-time minimum wage earners to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment. 1.7 minimum wage earners translates into a "Housing Wage" of \$11.13 per hour and an annual income of \$23,160.

This data comes from the annual "Out of Reach" report, prepared by the Washington D.C.-based National Low Income Housing Coalition, which analyzes the gap between rental housing costs and wages.

The data suggests that for one-person households finding affordable housing is even more difficult. For the first time there are no counties in Illinois—or nationwide—where a single full-time minimum wage earner can afford a one-bedroom apartment.

In Sangamon County, the Heartland Continuum of Care and the Mayor's Taskforce on Homelessness are coordinating efforts to increase affordable

housing. The 10-Year Strategic Plan to End Chronic Homelessness includes strategies to increase the number of affordable housing units in Springfield by two hundred (200) units by November 2014. In working towards the goal of 200 additional units, the Continuum of Care and the Mayor's Taskforce on Homelessness plans to increase the number of affordable housing units in Springfield by a minimum of 20 units during 2006 through a coordinated approach including all development avenues.

Anyone interested in joining the efforts to increase affordable housing are encouraged to attend the Continuum of Care's meetings the fourth Thursdays each month at 10:30 a.m. at Youth Service Bureau, 2901 Normandy Road.

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